

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, August 1, 2022**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The Meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 7:01 PM by Chairman Matt Kowalski with roll call:

Matt Kowalski, Chair - ABS	Thomas Phillips, Vice Chair	Jim Carty
Tom Covert	Alison Heatley	Chet Hill
Kyle Marsh	Karen Roberts	Wa Hubbard, Ex-Officio

Student Reps: Charlotte Bruderly and Julian Malek are present.

Also present: Michelle Aniol, Community Development Manager; Grace Whitney, Associate Planner; Megan Masson-Minock, Carlisle Wortman Associates; Justin Breyer, City Manager and City Clerk; Ashley Elliston-Cowher, Recording Secretary

**II. Action on Meeting minutes from: Regular Meeting Minutes – July 5, 2022**

Motion; Heatley support Carty to approve the July, 5 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following changes: there is a typo on page 2, should read "tasting" instead of "tasking" and on page 1, should say "Tom Covert will attend the next meeting in person as the new member of the Planning Commission".

Unanimous voice vote approval.

**III. Approval of agenda**

Motion; Heatley: support Carty to approve the agenda with the removal of item 9.D.

Unanimous voice vote approval.

**IV. Public Hearing(s)**

Zoning Ordinance Public Hearing Rescheduled to September 6<sup>th</sup>.

**V. Pre-Arranged Participation**

None

## **VI. Reports of Officers:**

### **A. Chairman Report – None**

- a. Welcome to Tom Covert to the Planning Commission.

### **B. Planning Commissioners and Council Ex officio Reports**

#### **a. City Council Report from Wa Hubbard**

- i. Since the last meeting, there have been 2 works sessions and a regular meeting discussion item about the fire station. If language will be put on the ballot for the upcoming election, it will either need to be decided at the next City Council meeting or a special meeting will need to be scheduled. The current plan is likely a scaled down version of the new station, with several compromises. City Council will prioritize educating the public about the fire station, prior to the election, if it goes on the ballot.
- ii. A question was asked if there was discussion about building the fire station in phases. Hubbard responded that this has been part of the discussion.
- b. City Council voted to put language on the upcoming ballot to amend the amendment to the charter that requires public vote for sale of any city property. The new language would allow the city to sell personal property, like old vehicles, without having to have a public vote. It is anticipated that the inability to sell personal property without a public vote was an unintended consequence of the new charter amendment.
- c. The application for the Kid's Montessori school was approved.
- d. There was a discussion item about selling the property that currently has Hotel Hickman, which was primarily brought up since the lease is coming to an end. There were no decisions made, but it was suggested that rather than selling the property, language could be added to the leasing agreement to require the lessee to take on some maintenance tasks, relieving the city of that burden.
- e. There was discussion with the owner of the Sloan-Kingsley property. A question was asked about what the presentation was like. Hubbard responded that some people found it helpful and others found the information provided in the meeting too vague to be able to move forward with a decision.

### **C. Committee Reports – None**

- a. Hill reported the ZBA met to consider a rear yard setback variance. The variance request was approved.

#### D. Community Development Office Reports – CDM

- a. Ms. Aniol provided the following report:
  - i. Cornman Farms and the Sloan-Kingsley properties are asking to connect to the city's public sewer and water, which would require annexation. A meeting is being set up with Cornman Farms to review their request and information provided. There will also be follow up about potential cost implications and the potential use of some of their property in Webster Township under a 425 agreement, for the potential of a 5<sup>th</sup> well. City staff are finalizing the estimated tap fees. This request pairs well with a city rate study that is currently being conducted by a specialized accounting firm. If the Sloan-Kingsley property should progress, what they decide to do will ultimately dictate what the city does or doesn't do. If it does go forward, negotiation for potential water well on that property will be considered.
  - ii. A new business is coming in at 8007 Main Street. The owner is a home curator who will be selling small home decorations and conducts decorating workshops.

#### VII. Citizen Wishing to Address the Commission (Non-Arranged Participation) –

None

#### VIII. Old Business –

##### A. Draft Zoning Ordinance Update -

- a. Ms. Masson-Minock reported the following:
  - i. Thanks to staff and Grace for proofreading and help.
  - ii. Tree replacement tables were updated to be 1:1 for landmark trees.
  - iii. Breweries, microbreweries, and other similar business were added into the definitions.
  - iv. Five-minute walk parking waiver was updated as discussed with planning commission. The updated language is in the meeting packet.
    - 1. A question was asked if this should be considered "block length" instead of a measurement of walking speed to be more objective. It was reported that the five-minute walk is an industry standard term that is measured at 1,320 feet, which is the average length a pedestrian can walk in five minutes. It was requested this definition be

added to the zoning ordinance language, along with a graphic to clarify what 'walkable' feet means, as opposed to 'as the crow flies'

2. A question was asked if ADA compliance should be considered with "walkable feet". It was reported that ADA compliance only applies to the onsite parking.
  3. A comment was made that there will likely still be internal debate about when to waive parking, as this definition still allows room for discretion of the Planning Commission.
  4. A comment was made that specific factors should be considered when deciding whether or not to provide a parking waiver. It was suggested that this language should be added to the ordinance. A comment was made that some factors to consider could include if it is in a grid pattern, if it is walkable in all weather conditions, if it is a safe and interesting walk, and if there are sidewalks. A comment was made that 'interesting' is too subjective to be considered a factor. It was reported that objective criteria could be listed to define interesting. However, it was ultimately agreed that 'interesting' would still be too subjective and should not be included in the ordinance language.
  5. A comment was made that the safety of the five-minute walk should be prioritized, even though it may limit parking options.
  6. The language for the ordinance to present at the public hearing will be updated to read: "Safe year-round walk on a public route of no more than five minutes".
- v. A recommendation was made that the easiest way to encourage front porches on homes would be to exclude front porches from the lot coverage calculation in the zoning ordinance. It was also stated that if the Planning Commission felt strongly about creating more specificity (measurements, calculations, etc) in the language, that could also be accomplished.
1. A comment was made that it was inconsistent to exclude front porches from lot coverage, but still have decks included in the lot coverage. A planning commission member responded that they thought decks should also be excluded from lot coverage.
  2. A question was asked if stairways should be included in lot coverage. It was agreed that stairways should not be included.

3. After discussion, language that will be presented at the public hearing for Zoning Ordinances Updates will exclude unenclosed porches, decks, and stairways from lot coverage.
  4. A comment was made that current city policy requires home owners who are close to the maximum lot coverage to sign a letter attesting that they understand they are near the maximum allowed lot coverage.
  5. An update was provided that over 700 letters would be mailed r out for every house that is undergoing a change in the zoning ordinance, the date of the public hearing, city staff contact information, and how the process of updating ordinances works. The letters will also include information about the changes that will affect that specific property.
- vi. A question was asked about the height in the residential zone currently being 35 feet and if that disallows for people to be able to have three-story homes. It was suggested that this measurement requirement should move from the mid-point of the gutter line on roofs rather than the mid-point of the gable. Ms. Masson-Minock responded that there is currently a limit in the zoning ordinance of 2.5 stories.
  - vii. A question was asked about the ability to put a shed or other small structure on the property line, instead of needing to have it 3 feet off the property line. Roberts responded that they do not support it being right on the property line due to the potential negative effects on the neighbors and avoid conflicts. Other planning commission members agreed. The language in the ordinance will not be changed.
- b. The public hearing for the Zoning Ordinance Update is Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **IX. New Business –**

- A. Variety Die and Stamping IFE Aesthetic and Practical Features Evaluation
  - a. The latest edition is their storage expansion, a little over 12,000 square feet, for which the company was asking for a tax abatement. City has a checklist for determining how many years an abatement can be granted. Part of the review is based on the aesthetics and practical features, which is determined by the Planning Commission. To this end, the planning commission was asked to evaluate components as outlined in the meeting packet and provide a score for this property.
  - b. The planning commission provided the following scores:
    - i. Building architecture & site compatibility - 0 (Adequate)

- ii. Building exterior construction materials - 0 (Adequate)
- iii. Landscaping and screening – 1 (Well-Designed)
- iv. Exterior Lighting and Identification – 0 (Adequate)
- v. Traffic Flow, Safety, Efficiency – 0 (Adequate)

Motion Carty, Support Marsh to assign the scores as noted.

Ayes: Heatley, Carty, Phillips, Hubbard, Hill, Marsh, Covert, Roberts

Nays: None.

Absent: Kowalski

Abstain: None.

Motion carries.

#### B. Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022

- a. Ms. Aniol provided the following report:
  - i. Information in this report a required report for re-development ready communities, of which the City of Dexter is a part.
  - ii. The report contains a few tweaks from the previous formatting and structure, provides a better narrative structure, and should be an improved report for the Planning Commission's review.
- b. A correction was suggested that Allison Heatley should be listed as the Planning Commission's secretary, not Karen Roberts.

#### C. Annual Review Bylaws

- a. Ms. Aniol provided the following report:
  - i. The changes made to the bylaws are listed in the meeting packet.
- b. A comment was made about site inspections for Council Members and if visiting these sites would be considered trespassing. It was reported that the language in the bylaws can be reviewed to clarify this parameter, but in general, a site inspection is a formal meeting which is different from a Council Member visiting a property.
- c. A suggestion was made to update the language on page 4 to change the language from "municipal office" to "elected office". question was asked about the language on page 4
- d. A comment was made that there is a typo on page 58 of the final version of the bylaws. The word "an" was written twice.
- e. A question was asked about page 59, number 3, article 6 and if it should be clarified how much time the public is given to talk, to ensure they do not have unlimited time. A suggestion was made to limit the time for public comment, but add language to allow the commission permission to extend time as needed.

**X. Proposed business for Tuesday, September 6, 2022:**

A. Public Hearing – Zoning Ordinance Update

**XI. Citizens wishing to address the Commission – None**

**XII. Adjournment**

Motion Carty; support Covert to adjourn at 8:11 PM.

Unanimous voice vote approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Elliston-Cowher

Recording Secretary

Approved for Filing: October 3, 2022